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THE POSTPONED PEACE

By Felix Morley

The official communique on the Moscow Conference of last December stated, over the signatures of Secretary Byrnes, Foreign Minister Bevin and Commissar Molotov, that:

> "The Council of Foreign Ministers will convoke a conference for the purpose of considering treaties of peace with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland. . . . The conference will be held not later than May 1, 1946."

In a radio report broadcast to the Nation from Washington on December 30, the Secretary of State repeated the assurance that: "The Peace Conference is to be called not later than May 1", and added:

> "The agreements reached . . . will facilitate the signing of peace treaties which is necessary to permit the withdrawing of troops from occupied territories. Only by the withdrawal of armies of occupation can the people have an opportunity to start on the long road to economic recovery. Only by economic recovery of other countries can we in America hope for the full employment of our labor and our capital in this interdependent world."

Today, a month after the latest date established for the holding of the initial Peace Conference, there is still no assurance of its convening. Secretary Byrnes says that the date, originally "not later than May 1", should be "definitely fixed for July 1 or July 15". But he would be the first to admit that there is no certainty of this desired outcome. Indeed, it is now possible, if not actually probable, that there will never be a general agreement among the victors on the division of the spoils of World War II.

There is nothing accidental in the fact that no peace treaties are being framed to give reality to the pleasant assurances of the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms. It is not primarily due to diplomatic inefficiency on our part that progress at the recent Paris meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers was, in the words of the Secretary of State, "disappointingly small". The ugly and depressing picture is one of clear design.

The character of that design was made more clear by Mr. Molotov when, in Pravda of May 27, sharply answering Mr. Byrnes, he defined the latter's self-styled "offensive for peace" as being in reality "an offensive against the Soviet Union". American imperialism,

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he added sardonically, fails to realize that "the future" lies with Communism.

II

The only major power which does not want a restoration of peace, secured by definite treaties, is Russia. For its obstructive attitude there are two very practical reasons.

In the first place, Russia has less than no desire to see that "full employment of . . . our capital in this interdependent world" which Mr. Byrnes has hopefully anticipated. Communist leadership has made abundantly clear that not the restoration but the destruction of the capitalist system is its objective. International political instability assists Communism. Peace treaties would invigorate Capitalism.

In the second place, continuation of a technical state of war enables the Moscow Government legally to maintain its troops throughout the whole huge area of Russian occupation; making Soviet provinces out of Prussia, Saxony and Eastern Austria; bringing the frontier of effective Communist control to a line which cuts the heart of Europe from the vicinity of the North Sea port of Hamburg to the equally vital Adriatic harbor of Trieste.

To assimilate Central Europe into the Soviet system requires not merely time but also dictatorial authority. Both are afforded by indefinite continuation of the present anomalous situation. We forget that as month succeeds month the conquerors can inexorably mould the lives of defeated peoples who are deprived of legal status of any kind. The writing of peace treaties, no matter how drastic, would restore some rights to the conquered, and force the evacuation of the Red Army. Therefore, by the always logical reasoning of the Kremlin, the writing of peace treaties should be postponed until the people of Central Europe have yielded to steady pressure and embraced Communism, to which no alternative is offered.

Secretary Byrnes no longer has any illusions on the subject. In his May 20 report on the recent Paris Conference of Foreign Ministers he said: "The making of peace with Austria is essential to the restoration of anything like conditions of peace in Europe." But, at Paris, "the Soviet representative declined to discuss the Austrian treaty or say when he would consider it".

In the present diplomatic struggle between Mr. Byrnes and Mr. Molotov the latter has some strong advantages, and will undoubtedly use them.

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III

Russia is in Central Europe "for keeps". The United States is not, and is becoming increasingly restless over occupation costs which for Germany alone are running at the rate of a billion dollars a year. So why should Moscow accept treaties which would evacuate all armies of occupation, Russian as well as American? The latter will eventually be called home anyway, and strong domestic political pressure, unknown in Russia, may be expected to expedite the process.

Another serious weakness in the bargaining position of the Secretary of State is the long series of blunders inherited from the leadership of President Roosevelt on which the Truman Administration must face the disagreeable pay-off. Outstanding among these blunders, all of them criticized as such by HUMAN EVENTS when they were in the making, have been:

The policy of unconditional surrender, preventing any utilization of German democratic elements, either to curtail the devastation of the war or to reincorporate the broken remnants of Germany into a unified and spiritually convalescent Western Europe.

The policy of appeasement, permitting Russia to advance the lines of Communist control over wide areas -- Central Germany, Manchuria, Northern Korea -- where Russian troops did little or no fighting and had no valid claim to the authority we have granted them.

The Morgenthau Plan, which through its wholly evil influence on the Potsdam Agreement has disastrously disrupted German economy, making the growth of Communism inevitable, in addition to transferring much of Germany's industrial plant, and the technicians capable of operating it, to Russian control.

The support of Quislings, sacrificing fundamental principles in order to accept Russian stooge governments in Poland, Yugoslavia and in Eastern Europe generally; thus ending all hope of a restoration of democratic processes or representative government in the huge territory over which the iron curtain has now fallen with ominous finality.

The policy of deception, deliberately fooling the American people, through OWI and other tax-supported propaganda agencies, into believing that Russia is a sister "democracy" and that the mere defeat of the Axis would bring a new Utopia, somehow guaranteed by the misnamed "United" Nations.

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IV

The General Assembly of this United Nations Organization is now the last feeble hope of Secretary Byrnes for extracting from Premier Stalin co-operation in the making of those definite peace treaties which the Russian Government is in principle -- not merely in detail -- unwilling to underwrite. Said Mr. Byrnes in his frank radio broadcast of May 21:

> "If a peace conference is not called this summer, the United States will feel obliged to request the General Assembly of the United Nations, under Article 14 of the Charter, to make recommendations with respect to the peace settlements."

As Mr. Molotov says, however, the Soviet Union can regard this "intimidation" with perfect equanimity. Article 14 only gives the General Assembly power to "recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation, regardless of origin, which it deems likely to impair the general welfare or friendly relations among nations . . ." Such recommendations would go to the Security Council, on which the Russian veto power is all but absolute.

Furthermore, the Charter contains another article which Russia can invoke to block utilization of Article 14 in the manner Secretary Byrnes suggests. Says Article 107:

> "Nothing in the present Charter shall invalidate or preclude action, in relation to any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory to the present Charter, taken or authorized as a result of that war by the Governments having responsibility for such action."

The wording, like most of the United Nations Charter, is clumsy and obscure. But what it does say plainly is that if Russia wants to keep half a million soldiers living off the land in Hungary, for instance, the United Nations Assembly cannot question its right to do so. Article 107, moreover, has priority over Article 14 and seems to mean that no treaty made with a former enemy state without Russian participation need be in any way binding on Russia -- which is quite enough to continue the situation that Stalin wants.

It has not yet dawned on the American public that Russia's interest in the United Nations has nothing to do with the re-establishment of capitalistic world order through conventionally punitive peace treaties. Overdue education in the line of Communist thinking is furnished by Mr. Molotov's observation that the Soviet Union will not underwrite treaties calculated "to enslave other countries economically, even though they may have been on the enemy side in the early war years".

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. III - No. 22

By Frank C. Hanighen May 29, 1946

The happy termination of the railroad strike brought a popular flush of victory that was a little too hectic. It may be granted that the President acted commendably to end the walkout, and indeed at that stage could say no less than he did. But satisfaction might well be tempered by the ominous implications of the remedies he has proposed for preventing another such calamity.

It should be obvious that if Labor's right to strike is drastically limited in certain industries, then individual freedom is sharply limited and Capital in these sections of business must be prepared to accept at least Government regulation if not thorough and unprofitable control. And when the President in his dramatic speech to Congress took the trouble to urge retention of OPA, he admitted the very robust ghost of government control to the banquet table. The OPA recommendation did not draw applause, but it is not certain that the silence signified thinking.

The President's proposal for inducting strikers into the armed services as a means of making them work no doubt gave angry minds much satisfaction. Nevertheless it is depressing that so few have noticed the totalitarian character of the request. The Fascist implications are concealed by limiting the extraordinary powers to the period of war emergency.

But, how long will this war emergency last? Stalin, as noted in our Analysis this week, quite evidently deems the end of the war emergency an indefinite matter. Mr. Truman, it can be assumed, would like to bring it to a close as soon as possible, and so honest a man could have no ulterior motive. But world conditions may force our President to continue sine die such war measures as now delight so many people. These are not pleasant thoughts to intrude on a period of rejoicing. Yet one does not have to be a Cassandra to see how pertinent they are.

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There is no doubt that President Truman was the man of the hour, during the last weekend. Democrats who had been mournful about political prospects a week previously felt invigorated by the acclaim which greeted the President's stand on the rail strike. Party stock reflected the same inflationary rise apparent in industrial equities.

But, after the first wave of enthusiasm subsided, the Democratic chances began to take on a less rosy hue. Political observers with a fishy eye ask the question: In what quarters is the President winning praise? And the cold-blooded reply is: Among those elements who wouldn't vote Democratic anyway. An even more chilling query arises: Will the President and Democrats suffer because of the generally adverse reaction of organized Labor?

The answer isn't definite, but its uncertainty is not encouraging to Democratic Headquarters. Not all of Labor will take Truman's action badly, but a considerable portion may harbor a grudge. Out of an estimated 15 million labor votes a defection of a few hundred thousand could upset the Democratic hold on key industrial counties. It all depends on how well the Republicans exploit a potential, if not imminent, breach in Labor ranks. That is the $64 question.

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The policy of Mr. A. F. Whitney, head of the Trainmen's Union, in the railroad strike followed a pattern all too familiar to anyone who knows the leaders in recent industrial history. An ambitious individual fights his way to the top in union conven-

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tions by promising much to the rank and file. He then tries to retain power as against rivals in the union; and he may even aspire to dominate associated unions. Often a radical faction in his own union arises. Catering to its increasing demands, he goes farther, farther -- then, too far.

Mr. Whitney's career suggests that he is not without ambition. A rugged individual, intolerant of checks and balances, he served only briefly as head of the railway unions' association. The other leaders did not like his methods. But that did not discourage him. Could he nevertheless unofficially assume a commanding position in the movement? It was a tempting idea.

Now Whitney is believed to be quite conservative in his political ideas. But militant Leftists applauded his ambition. Breaking with the ultra-conservative tradition of railway labor presidents, he started to associate his name with Left elements. He became a member of the Executive Board of the Citizen's PAC and a member of a number of Left "front" organizations.

When the present rail dispute arose, Whitney envisaged the possibility that by dynamic action he might emerge as the leader of all railway labor. He won Johnston of the Engineers to his views. With this alliance, and cheers from the Left, he turned down the 16 cent offer of the Railway Mediation Board and demanded more. If he won -- it was calculated -- the rank and file of railway labor would thereafter look to him as their true bellwether, rather than to their conservative union presidents. Whitney gambled and lost -- because of an aroused public opinion and Mr. Truman's sudden firmness.

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The crucial French election campaign has been marked by (1) an intense anti-Communist wave of feeling; and (2) the traditional desire of French candidates to advertise themselves as "Left". The first characteristic appears in the widespread denunciations of Communist leader Thorez, as a collaborationist during the Soviet-Nazi honeymoon of 1939-41. The French radio illuminates the second: "Five great formations are presenting themselves to the people: Communists, Socialists, Rassemblement des Gauches, MRP [Mouvement Republicain Populaire] and PRL [Parti Republicain de la Liberté]. All call themselves left wing parties and nothing is more significant of the revolution of minds. . . . These five formations represent: The Soviet left wing, the Marxist left wing (Socialist), the traditional and liberal left wing (Rassemblement), the Catholic and spiritual left wing (MRP) and the Conservative left wing (PRL)."

The Communists are on the defensive because of the prevailing anti-totalitarian wind; but they have the best organization and more money than the others. The Socialists suffer from their defeat in the recent referendum, but they have Blum presumably returning with an American loan. The Rassemblement have 75 year old Herriot and the shattered remains of the Radical Socialist organization. The MRP has a poor political organization, but reportedly enjoys the support of the Church. The PRL has a fine fanaticism, and more money than any other party save the Communists; but it has no outstanding figure nor much of a political organization.

There is keen speculation as to the effect on France of the striking Communist electoral victory in Czechoslovakia last Sunday. This has converted a country which used to be called an island of Democracy into one which is now a westward-pointing spearhead of Communism. How will the French voter take this?

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It was news to hear that the Schweinfurth ball bearing works, dismantled in the American zone of Germany for reparations to Russia, were not to go to Russia at all; but were to be set up again just across the demarcation line in Thuringia (in Russian-controlled zone). This report, which came in a broadcast from a Russian-controlled radio in Eastern Germany, was followed by another significant story. Certain factories

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in the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia were moved out, presumably to Russia, as reparations; and the unfortunate Sudeten-German factory hands were deported to Germany. So the Czechs thought. But it turns out that the deportees are not so unfortunate as expected. For these factories were actually moved, not to Russia, but to the Saxony-Thuringia areas of Germany, where the Russians are in control. And the Sudeten-Germans are back at their old lathes again, only in a new locality.

These Russian maneuvers serve two important purposes: (1) They give Russia an industrial potential in a part of their zone which was principally agricultural; and (2) they make the Germans in the Russian zone grateful to Russia, and the Germans in the western zones resentful against the British and Americans who dismantle their factories and throw them out of work. No wonder that the British and American authorities have stopped knocking down factories and are talking sense about maintaining German industry and integrating the western occupation zones.

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Mr. Hoover's influence and counsel has resulted in at least one important change in the Administration's Japanese policy. After a survey of conditions under MacArthur's régime, Mr. Hoover arrived in Honolulu on his way back to America. There he met Mr. Edwin W. Pauley, Mr. Truman's reparations representative, bound for Japan. Mr. Pauley, it may be recalled, took a "Morgenthau" view of the economic treatment of Japan when he was in the Far East last December. But, in Honolulu, he absorbed some new and constructive ideas on Japan from Mr. Hoover.

Truman's "world food ambassador" explained to Truman's "world reparations emissary" certain basic principles of Japanese economy. If Japan is to survive and feed its people, it must have an export trade in light industry products to pay for imports of food and raw materials: so ran the burden of Mr. Hoover's lecture. His listener emerged from the conference wiser -- and determined.

A few days later, at Tokyo, he reversed his position of last winter and said of the Japanese, "Our job is to remove their ability to conduct a future war, not to grind them down". He emphasized that textile plants in Japan would not be removed as reparations. Nor, he went on, would he strip Japan of all facilities for making machine tools; a proportion will remain in Japan. Japan can also retain oil refining machinery, said Pauley, as he laid down the principle that the reparations plan does not envisage stripping the Japanese of everything needed to maintain a healthy economy. Since Japanese industrialists have considered reparations uncertainties -- intensified by Pauley's "Carthaginian" ideas of last December -- one of the greatest obstructions to reconstruction, Pauley's new policy, thanks to Mr. Hoover, has done much to clear the way for a measure of Japanese recovery.

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The Russians seem to have carried out a systematic looting of the art treasures, known to connoisseurs throughout the world, which they found in their zone in Germany. One huge building in Potsdam was converted into a shipping room where literally millions of pictures, volumes, objets d'art, etc., were packed and sent to Russia. Through this center went the contents of the former Ducal Gallery of Gotha, including its print-room; also the furniture, pictures, vases, sculpture from the Potsdam palaces -- Neues Palais, Sans Souci, Rheinsberg. Among these were the famous marbles of Coustou. In Berlin, the Russians have not only taken away all pictures they could seize, but also the Pergamon altar, the "Mschatta" facade, the entire coin collection, the library of the Archeological Reichsinstitut, etc. The Berlin museums actually own only what was transported away to the West and is being held in trust for them. This is now in custody under excellent American management in Marburg and Wiesbaden, and includes about 250 of the finest pictures from the former Royal palaces. Finally, the entire Dresden picture gallery has gone to Moscow, except for about 200 pictures. The reliable source of the above information adds: "So, museum activities in Dresden are quite simplified."

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Notes and Quotes

One sometimes has to stop and think when reminded that UN means "United Nations". "If it had grown up", said Alice, about the Duchess' baby, "it would have been a dreadfully ugly child; but it makes a rather handsome pig." At any rate, those who find UN affairs a veritable Wonderland world may enjoy the following story.

Mr. John B. Hutson is the ranking American official on the UN Secretariat and apparently takes the title UN all too literally. For, when asked to attend a luncheon in New York for General Bor last week, he did not refuse. To most of the Polish nation, General Bor is a hero because he fought the Germans. To the Polish Government and its UN representative, Dr. Oscar Lange, the general is a "war criminal". Undeterred by this picture, Mr. Hutson consulted Ed Stettinius, American Delegate on the UN Security Council. "Sure, go ahead", sagely advised Ed, or so we hear the story; "Bor's a Pole. All Poles are grand fellows [and mostly Democrats]. Oscar [Lange] would love to have you there, I'm sure."

Hutson went. Bor made a speech attacking the Polish Government and Russia. Hutson said a few words: "On behalf of the United Nations, I welcome you to this city." This aroused Mr. Oscar Lange to protest to the UN Secretary, and to charge that Bor "is an enemy of the Polish nation". He was seconded by the Russian, Gromyko, who charged that Hutson had "compromised the name of the organization itself". Mr. Hutson, in face of this, found difficulty in recalling what he had said. ---- "But I don't want to go among mad people", Alice remarked. "Oh, you can't help that", said the Cheshire Cat, "we're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad."

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Mr. Alaric Jacob, in the Political Quarterly (April-June, 1946), doesn't believe that "blood is thicker than water" and takes a British "neutral line", which this column has noted before (see NMG, March 20): "This writer would assert that from the standpoint of solid national interest we cannot afford to indulge any preference as between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., but that to balance a certain innate pro-American trend based on fancied linguistic, racial and sentimental affinities, which are in fact unreciprocated and often 'not solid', as Mr. Molotov would say, we should tip the scales a trifle the other way. He would affirm, without any holus-bolus, that our premier embassy abroad should be Moscow; our second, Washington."

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The malaise which many of us now feel about the future of Europe is not new. A century ago Metternich neatly said: "Europe fait pitié à l'homme d'esprit et l'horreur à l'homme vertueux." And Talleyrand, an even more shrewd observer than the Austrian statesman remarked: "Ce que deviendra le monde, je n'en sais rien. Ce que je vois, c'est que rien n'est remplacé; ce qui finit, finit tout à fait. On ne voit clairement que ce qu'on a perdu." Yet these two men, at the Congress of Vienna, saved European Civilization for another hundred years.

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Aneurin Bevan, the witty and eloquent British Minister of Health, grappled with a ticklish subject in addressing the American Chamber of Commerce in London on May 14 (London Times, May 15): "It was perhaps difficult for some Americans, some of whom were living in opulence and with fat tables to realize how very grave the problem (famine) was. American newspapers asked what was Great Britain going to do? To paraphrase a famous utterance, 'Never did so many expect so much from so few.' (Laughter)"

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